

HOUSE RESOLUTION 89
By DeBerry J

A RESOLUTION to create a special committee to study issues relative to relationships among administrators, teachers and students and the admission and retention of students in the public schools of this state.

WHEREAS, proper respect for authority and appropriate social behavior by students have reached their nadir in Tennessee's public school system; and

WHEREAS, quality education will only become a reality when appropriate social behavior and the proper respect for authority are once again instilled into the student population of our public schools and when teachers regain the authority to enforce standards of discipline and appropriate conduct in their respective classrooms; and

WHEREAS, teachers must be treated in a professional manner and as equal partners in the educational process in order for us to restore our public schools to their proper role as purveyors of quality education; and

WHEREAS, legislation has been introduced before the 100th General Assembly to limit admission to and retention in public schools to only those children who exhibit appropriate social behavior and the respect for authority which a reasonable person would expect, given the child's age and grade level; and

WHEREAS, this legislation would also require the parent or guardian of each child enrolled in public school to sign a statement to the effect that the parent or guardian takes

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responsibility for teaching and reinforcing in the child the appropriate level of social skills and respect for authority; and

WHEREAS, under the provisions of this legislation, if a child did not exhibit appropriate social behavior and respect for authority, the child would not be admitted to public school, or if already admitted, would be dismissed until the next school year; and

WHEREAS, this legislation would permit a child denied admission or dismissed from a public school for inappropriate social behavior or lack of respect for authority to be admitted or transferred to an alternative school; provided, the parent or guardian of the child agrees to pay the costs associated with placing and retaining the child at the alternative school; failure to meet this financial obligation would result in the child being dismissed and prohibited from returning to public school until the next school year; and

WHEREAS, these issues relative to the proper role of teachers and standards of appropriate student conduct in our public school system are vitally important to all Tennesseans, and they should be carefully and exhaustively studied by this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, That there is hereby created a special committee to study issues relative to relationships among administrators, teachers and students and the admission and retention of students in the public schools of this state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in its deliberations, the special committee shall review proposals to: (1) limit public school attendance to children who exhibit appropriate social behavior and the proper respect for authority; (2) require parents and guardians to take personal responsibility for their children's behavior; and (3) require parents and guardians to pay the costs associated with placing and retaining their children in alternative schools, in addition to any other proposals the committee deems relevant.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special committee shall hear testimony and seek input from administrators, principals and teachers from across the state with a view toward developing policies and procedures to ensure the professional treatment of teachers as equal partners in the public educational process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special committee shall consist of five (5) members of the House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all appropriate state agencies shall provide assistance to the special committee upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all legislative members of the special committee who are duly elected members of the General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly, and at its first meeting shall elect a chair, vice-chair, and such other officers the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation or interim reports, to the One-Hundredth General Assembly no later than February 15, 1998, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.